



Ageing well in our homes

OHID webinar series

8th February 2022

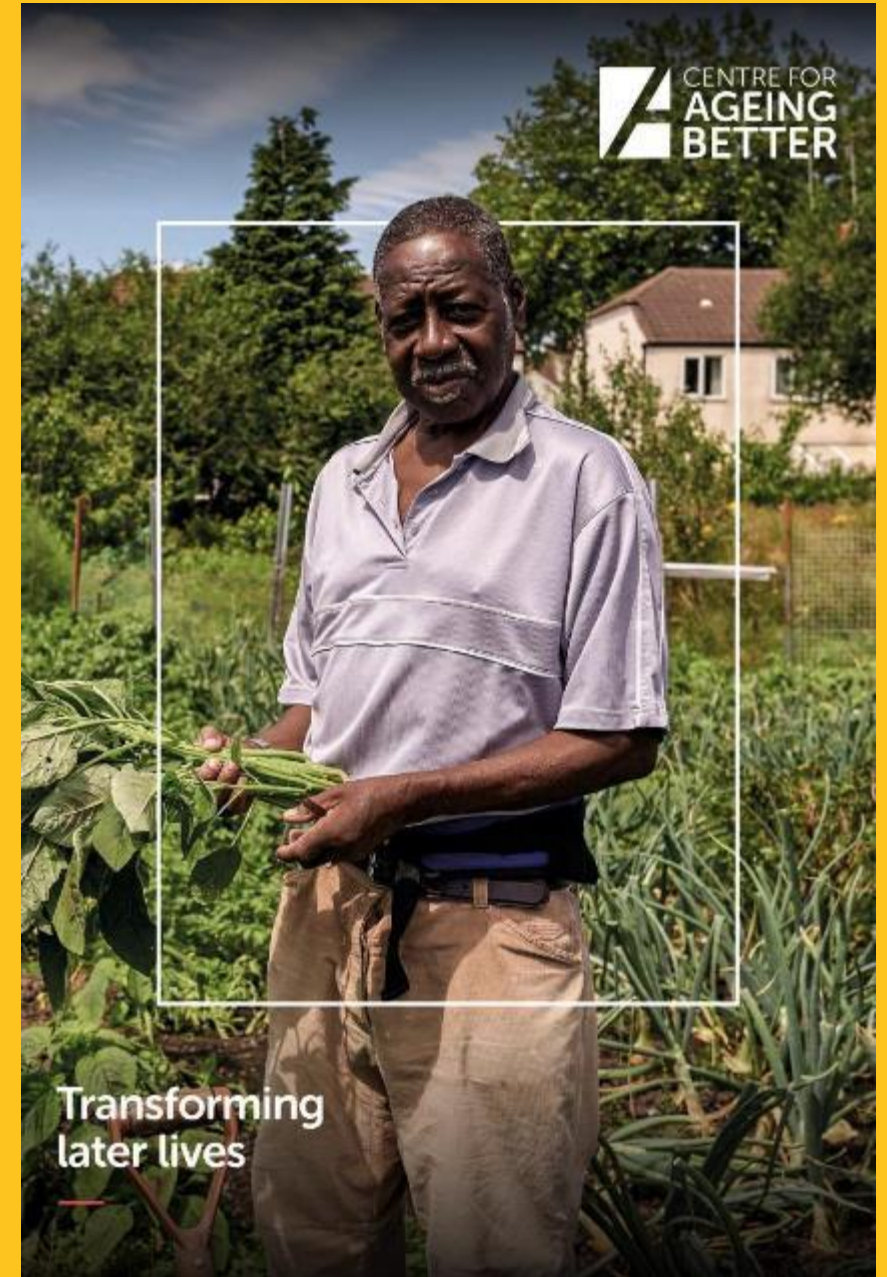
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ageing-better.org.uk

Who we are

The Centre for Ageing Better creates change in policy and practice informed by evidence and works with partners across England

We are a charitable foundation, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, and part of the government's What Works Network.



In the next 20 years, the number of people aged over 65 will grow by around 40%.



Centre for Ageing Better

Source: ONS, 'Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland' (2019)

91%

of our
current homes
don't meet
accessibility
standards.



Centre for Ageing Better

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2020)



Aims of the coalition

- Make the accessible, adaptable design standard (set out in Building Regulations M4 Category 2) the mandatory baseline for all new homes.
- Local Authority housing policies that reflect the needs of older and disabled people
- Commitments from housing developers and associations to provide high quality homes fit for the future

What's the problem?



Our housing stock

The UK has the oldest housing stock in Europe.¹ An overwhelming 91% of homes do not provide even the lowest level of accessibility, leaving fewer than one in ten homes suitable for older or disabled people to visit, never mind live in.²

91%



Our changing needs

And yet, increasing numbers of us are living into our 70s, 80s, 90s and beyond. In less than 20 years, one in four of us will be over 65 - equating to around 17 million people.³

One in five adults aged 65-69 need help with one or more activities of daily living (such as bathing, cooking or using the toilet). By the time people reach their 80s, this figure rises to more than one in two of us. But as it stands, only one new accessible home is planned for every fifteen people over 65 by 2030.⁴

Contrary to common misconceptions more than 90% of older people live in mainstream housing rather than specialist housing or care homes.⁵ Understandably, most of us want to stay in our own homes, streets and communities for as long as we can, and our homes should enable more of us to do this.⁶



Our changing climate

Some climate change experts have suggested that every new home we build today should last at least 200 years with zero carbon targets in mind. Over that period, each home is likely to be occupied by around 20 different households and 70 individuals - and visited by thousands of others. These will be people of all ages and with different needs.

What needs to change

The solution is simple: change building regulations to make all new homes 'accessible and adaptable' as the baseline standard - also known as M4(2) in building regulations.

Take action now

The Centre for Ageing Better is calling for urgent action to make this happen, as part of the Housing Made for Everyone (HoME) coalition of ten charities and housing organisations. The government is seeking views now on options to raise standards.



Please **add your voice** and tell the government that change is needed to build the right homes for the future.

Good Home Inquiry



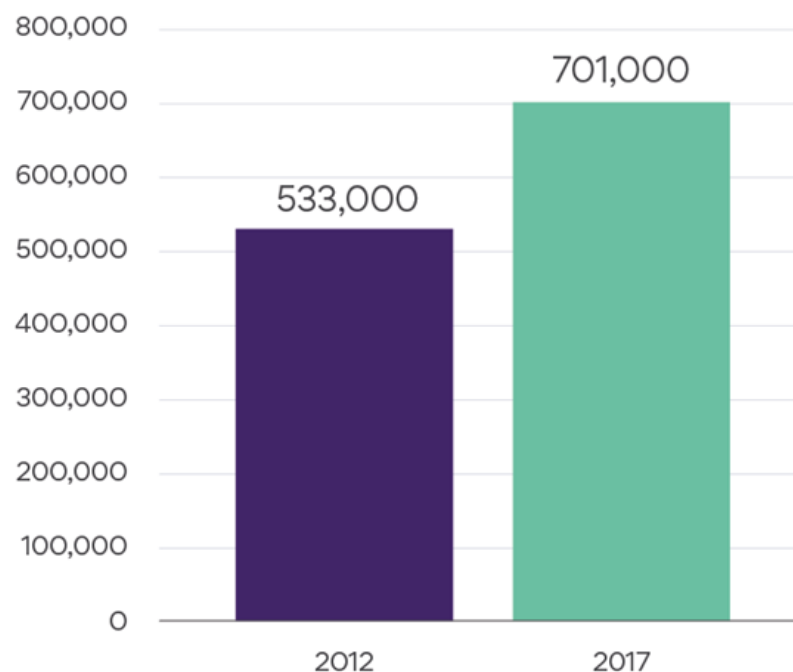
Why do we need the Good Home Inquiry?

- Around **10 million people** in England currently live in a home that presents a serious threat to their health and safety – defined by the government as ‘non-decent’
- Of the **4.1 million non-decent homes**, almost half of these are lived in by someone over 55
- **£1.4 billion annual cost to NHS** from poor quality homes



The number of over 75s in non-decent homes has risen

Over 75s living in non-decent homes



An increase of 31%

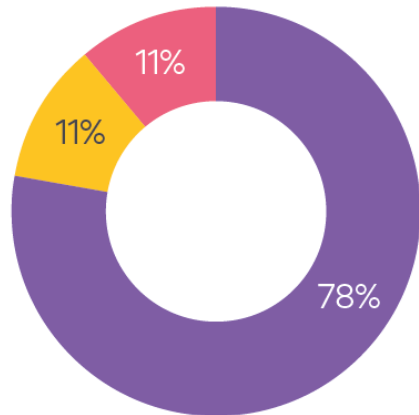
Households headed by someone aged 75 or over are disproportionately likely to be living in a non-decent home, with more than 1 in 5 of these households living in a non-decent home. Worryingly, the number of over 75s living in non-decent homes rose from 533,000 in 2012 to 701,000 in 2017.

Older homeowners are particularly at risk

Poor housing is a particular concern for older home owners with low incomes or fixed pensions because of their ability to pay for repairs.

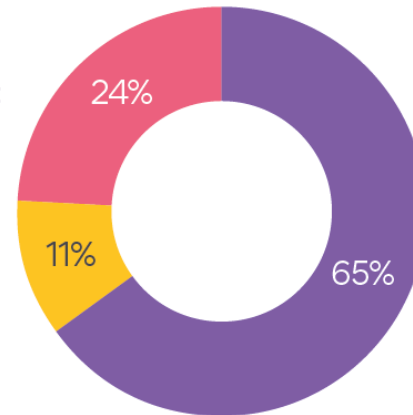
Tenure types of households headed by someone 55+ living in non-decent homes:

- Owner occupier
- Social rented
- Private rented



Tenure types of households all ages living in non-decent homes:

- Owner occupier
- Social rented
- Private rented



Single person households of all ages are also more likely to live in a non-decent home compared to multi person households (22% v 17%). The level is particularly high for those who are in the 55-64 yrs age group (26% vs overall average of 17% and for multi person household in the same age group 16%).

Why the Good Home Inquiry?

- **Health inequalities**
The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and amplified housing-related health inequalities
- **Demographic change**
One in four of us will be aged over 65 by 2041
- **Climate crisis**
Legal obligations from UK government to reach net zero by 2050



COVID-19 exacerbated existing concerns about the impact of homes on our health in two ways

1. Increased exposure

- Association with negative health outcomes including cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, and general decline in physical and mental health
- Conditions that result in higher susceptibility to adverse COVID-19 outcomes

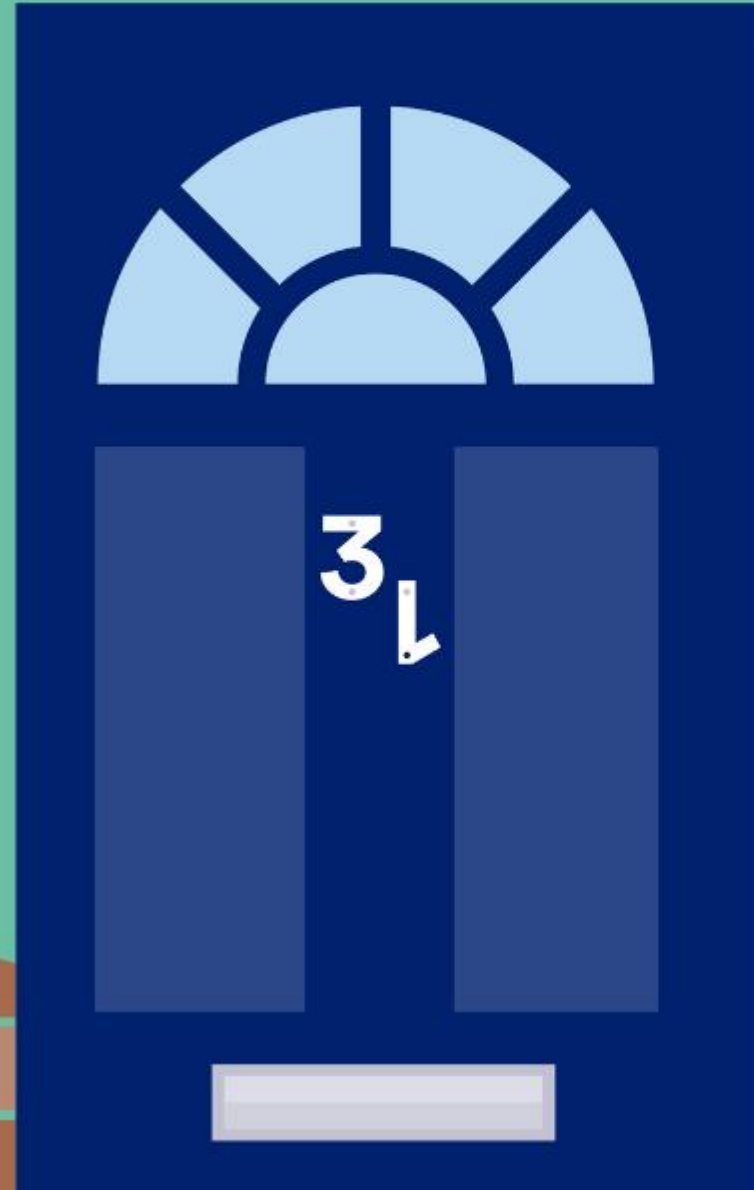
2. Conditions of poor quality housing, such as overcrowding, have led to increased transmission



Nearly a third of adults in Britain (31%) reported having physical or mental health problems because of the condition of their homes during lockdown.

Centre for Ageing Better and The King's Fund

Source: National Housing Federation, Housing issues during lockdown: health, space and overcrowding (2020)





Barriers and support

The Good Home Inquiry investigated **the real-life experiences** of older people living in poor-quality homes to better understand how to address these issues:

- BritainThinks research as part of Good Home Inquiry (co-commissioned by Ageing Better and UKRI) brought together **89 people from all tenures** experiencing problems with their homes
- **Around a third of people** aged 50 or older said their home needed work done to make it suitable as they get older
- Participants cited **not having enough money and not feeling able or confident enough** to get the work done

Quotes from our research

‘[My home] can have both positive and negative impacts on my daily wellbeing and mental health... the kitchen can be difficult to manoeuvre [around] due to uneven flooring so cooking can be and feel somewhat precarious. Even the act of making a cup of tea and taking it to my living room can feel like an obstacle course... If it’s not completely flat, it’s almost like being on hyper alert.’

“Mental health is a huge thing. I’ve been diagnosed bipolar three years ago. Because of the state of this house, it was making my condition really bad. Because of my disability we don’t really go out. You’re sitting in a messy house, there’s mould. The depression can get rid of all motivation.”

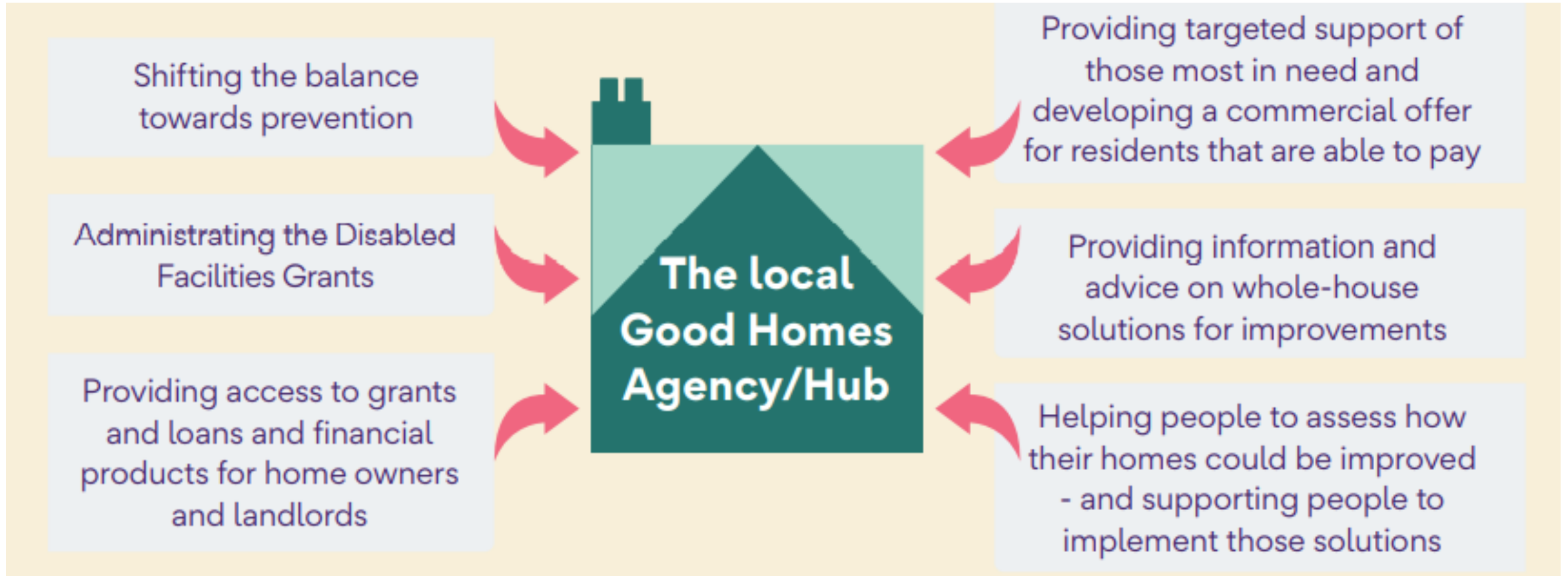
“You shouldn’t have to live in such an insecure property... You think you’re helpless, aren’t you, as to who you turn to...”

Female, 56, Suburban, Social housing

The Good Home Inquiry response to these challenges

We developed a set of **ambitious, workable and realistic** solutions to improve England's homes:

- **A cross-government strategy** for existing homes with a ministerial champion
- Mandating a local 'Good Home Agency' in every local area
- Replacing the current Decent Homes Standard with an **enhanced Good Home Standard**
- **Government-backed financing** to support a wider range of financing products and more grants for those on low incomes
- **Clear direction for Homes England** to make improving the quality of existing homes a strategy objective



Taking forward the Good Home Inquiry

- **Good Home Agency**

Campaigning to government to establish a national network of Good Home Agencies and testing a new approach with our partners in Lincolnshire County Council and others

- **New models of finance**

Establishing a Finance Working Group to test out models of helping homeowners and landlords access the finance they need

- **Consumer guidance**

Providing guidance to those in greatest housing need on resources and support available to improve homes and inform decisions on moving home



Thank you

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